

## **Vision 21 Implementation Committee**

Meeting Minutes, Thursday, August 3, 2006

Approved Sept. 21, 2006

Members Present: Austin Bliss, Donna Brescia, Vinnie DeNovellis, Kirk Hazlett, Meg O'Brien, Jennifer Page, Ann Rittenberg, Paul Solomon, Jay Szklut

Members Absent: Sara Oaklander, Paul Santos

Others Present: Delores Keefe

### **1. Administrivia:**

Jennifer opened the meeting and asked committee members to report on their distribution of the Meet Belmont flyers. placeDee reported a good distribution from her office. Most members had distributed their flyers and those that had not would distribute this week as it is now within one month of the event date.

Minutes of the July 6 meeting were approved unanimously.

The July 20 minutes were revised to reflect a count of 3 votes for Vision Day and not 1 vote. Minutes were then accepted unanimously as revised.

### **2. Continuation of discussion from last meeting on planning for public input/conversations:**

2.1 Jennifer began the discussion by reviewing the results of earlier selection process, noting that the purpose of the night's meeting was to focus in on one or two elements from each 'bucket'. It was agreed that we would review the "buckets" as a group, elucidating ideas where needed, and then follow Donna's suggestion that we break into small groups for further development of ideas. The three categories were these:

#### **Bucket #1: "Inform and Educate"**

- Use town's website;
- Use channel 8: series of spots posing questions to provoke thinking;
- Series of articles in Belmont Citizen Herald
- Inserts in tax/utility bills.

Of the 4 items in Bucket 1 Meg thought that items 1,3, and 4 were similar. Jay thought that items 2,3, and 4 were similar.

#### **Bucket # 2: "Inquire, Discuss and Engage"**

- Bring people together to discuss each topic or the vision as a whole;
- Conduct a series of community meetings;
- Invent a transportable format that we can take to meetings and events;
- At meeting/events, hang on the wall: "things going on" and "things we wish were going on" and invite people to add.

Generally, the committee felt that all 4 items were similar. Jay noted that only item # 1 divided the vision into topical areas.

### **Bucket # 3: “Events and Related Ideas”**

- Town Day: Vision trivia and/or scavenger hunt;
- Photography Contest;
- Vision Day declared by the Selectmen (everyone must meet one new person);
- 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

The committee first clarified what was meant by photo contest and concurred that this could include photos or artwork that reflect the principles of the vision. The Committee also discussed the links between the various events and how they might be used to promote a vision day.

2.2 The Committee broke up into smaller groups to discuss each of the buckets and then reconvened to present the results of their discussion.

#### **Group 1 - “Inform and Educate” (Austin Bliss, Vin DeNovellis, Paul Solomon)**

The team met and held the 4 ideas against the three criteria. The criterion that distinguished the ideas was “breadth/reach” and inserts in electric bills best met this criterion. We were aware that the electric company frequently runs a two sided, one page newsletter, so we thought this was a perfect vehicle for our communications. We also felt that whatever we designed for the electric bill could easily be replicated into the other channels (e.g. put up on the website, reprinted in the newspaper, etc.)

Ideas for content for the insert included:

- the vision statement
- the story of the vision
- activities in the town / how we're all working towards the vision -who we are / how to get involved / how to contribute ideas -opportunity for 'fun stuff' (e.g. vision crossword puzzle, etc.)

The idea was that we could assemble several different newsletter editions, and then rotate through them as the year went on. When we reconvened as a large group, the question was raised re: the cost of the printing/folding/inserting of the newsletter into the electric bill. Our small group acknowledged that that was not properly considered, but proposed it could be donated, underwritten, or perhaps the town may have some money to cover the expense.

#### **Group 2 - “Inquire, Discuss and Engage”**

The group discussed the purpose of this effort and concurred that focusing discussions by topic rather than the vision as a whole would likely broaden the audience. Having small group discussions or forums would likely be the most effective means of disseminating the vision and these groups would be composed of four or five individuals that represented “stakeholders.” Discussion could reflect a series of questions such as: What is the role of the residents, the government, the business community in making Belmont a welcoming community?

These discussions could be videotaped to put on Channel 8 or excerpts could be typed and placed on poster boards with requests for display at community events. These boards would attempt to be interactive by soliciting comments from those attending the event. It might also be possible to engage high school students to design an e-Belmont game along the lines of SimCity.

### Group 3 - **“Events and Related Ideas”**

The group focused on the initiatives of a Photo Contest in the months immediately preceding and a Scavenger Hunt/Trivia Contest concurrent with “Belmont Town Day.” The Photo Contest, tentatively planned for the month of April, will have categories ranging from child to adult so that all ages will have an equal opportunity to participate. The theme of the contest, “Belmont Vision” (working title), will serve as an educational mechanism in the months leading up to Town Day, and entrants will be encouraged to submit a photo that they believe portrays some aspect of the Vision. A panel of judges including professional photographers as well as nonprofessionals will evaluate the entries and award prizes in categories yet to be determined.

News releases announcing the contest and rules for participating will be sent to the *Belmont Citizen-Herald* and *Boston Globe North Weekly* newspapers as well as other appropriate media as identified. Flyers publicizing the contest will be posted in libraries, schools and supporting businesses as well as other appropriate display areas.

Winning photographs will be displayed both at Town Meeting and in a visible location during Town Day. Prizes will be awarded to winners in a ceremony that is part of the Town Day activities. News releases will be sent to the *Belmont Citizen-Herald* and *Boston Globe North Weekly* announcing the winners.

The Scavenger Hunt/Trivia Contest, again focusing on aspects of the Vision, will take place during Town Day. Contestants will be “encouraged” to visit various tables during Town Day to find answers/clues. A news release introducing the contest will be sent to the *Belmont Citizen-Herald* and *Boston Globe North Weekly* in advance of Town Day, and a follow-on release will be sent announcing winners. Information relating to the Vision...pamphlets/flyers, etc...will be available at participating tables.

Actions that must occur include:

1. Securing approval of the Belmont Business Association
2. Development of a list of relevant Town Day participants who would be appropriate “pieces” of the Contest, and
3. Securing of an agreement from those organizations to support and participate in the Contest.

4. Next meeting: September 7, 2006.

Minutes respectfully submitted by:

Jay Szklut  
Secretary Pro Tempore

